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ATTITUDES AND FUNDAMENTAL FACTORS IN THE
REHABILITATION OF BLIND PERSONS IN
AGRICULTURAL PURSUITS

by

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Attitudes and Fundamental Factors in the Rehabilitation of Blind
Persons in Agricultural Pursuits

Thesis directed by Assistant Professor Dorothy R. Martin

The purpose of this study is to evaluate, through review of the literature and a questionnaire, attitudes and practices that account for the status of rural rehabilitation of the blind.

A compilation of the material indicates: (a) more blind have been rehabilitated in rural pursuits by their own initiative than by help from agencies; (b) agencies have rehabilitated relatively few blind in this area because of restricted resources, lack of staff with specialized skills, and failure to allow sufficient time for development of rural objectives; (c) recognition by society, of the potentialities of the rural blind, is improving due to increasing successes by the blind; (d) blind agriculturists already in the field have confidence in their own ability to be successful agriculturists and believe other interested blind persons can accomplish rural objectives.

An attempt has been made to review fundamental factors which affect blind persons seeking vocational assistance through agencies, including counseling, training, resources and placement.

On the basis of these results, recommendations have been made that extended support should be given agencies by the Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation along the lines of: (a) de-emphasis on the statistical reporting of case closures which may permit staff to spend the amount of time needed to develop rural cases; (b) sponsoring introduction of legislation to make farm loans more readily obtainable through the Farmers Home Administration.

This abstract of about 225 words is approved as to form and content. I recommend its publication.

Signed Dorothy R. Martin
Instructor in charge of dissertation

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Incidence of Blindness

Blindness imposes a disability but it does not necessarily impose a handicap. Hamilton (10, pp. 16-17) stresses in his writings that anyone who would understand rehabilitation must understand the distinction between them. The problem of the handicapped is not the severity of the disability in itself, rather, it is the severity of the obstacles which disability has posed for the individual. He has clarified his remarks by defining a disability as, "A condition of impairment, physical or mental, having an objective aspect that can usually be described by a physician." He also defined a handicap as, "The cumulative results of the obstacles which disability interposes between the individual and his maximum functional level." Encompassed within the latter terminology is the core of speculation about the whole subject of rural rehabilitation of the blind.

There is no specific definition of blindness. Most agencies establish their own interpretation. The following definition encompasses the generally accepted measurement used by most

public and private agencies in the United States and Territories when determining eligibility for services:

Definition of Blindness: any person whose visual acuity does not exceed 20/200 in the better eye after correction with glasses or whose peripheral vision subtends an angle no greater than twenty degrees.

The Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (7, p. III) estimates that 36.3 percent of the general population lives in rural areas. Most national agencies serving the blind generally agree that there is an overall average of two blind persons per one thousand in the country's population. On the basis of such estimates it may be assumed that there are approximately 114,000 rural blind among an estimated 57 million persons residing in rural areas.

Rehabilitation agencies have estimated that approximately 25 percent of the blind population can be rehabilitated and successfully placed in self-sustaining employment. These estimates indicate there could be approximately 28,500 blind individuals in rural areas who could be considered with respect to feasibility for rural opportunities.

Merton Lake (17) pointed out that it is reasonable to expect that first consideration should be given to the development of work opportunities in urban areas because the majority are residents of the city, are adjusted to it, and more diversified jobs are to be found there. At the same time he believes that proportionate consideration should be given to the development of

employment opportunities for the other large group of blind who might be more adaptable to some kind of rural livelihood.

George Stewart, Rural Agricultural Specialist (29), has stated that in considering rural opportunities for the blind there should not be forgotten those metropolitan and urban individuals who may very possibly have what is called "the green thumb." There are many such prospects who might well succeed in projects such as greenhouse or public park system work.

Purpose of the Study

Search of the literature indicates that no overall study has been made to evaluate the basic attitudes, fundamental factors, and practices affecting the rehabilitation of blind people in rural pursuits. The purpose of this study is to attempt to bring together and to summarize present day attitudes, fundamental factors, and practices related to the rehabilitation of blind persons in rural activity. The writer hopes that the study may serve as a point of departure for any agency for the blind that may wish to explore the wisdom of present or future rural rehabilitation services within the area it serves.

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Approach to the Study

Any degree of successful rehabilitation is ultimately the product of the concepts held by the disabled person, the community, and the program that serves the rehabilitant. This writer anticipated that the position of rural rehabilitation of the blind today would be a reflection of whatever the concepts might be.

The individual

The individual is the pivotal point in the entire process. Accordingly, each of the 54 agencies for the blind throughout the United States and Territories was requested to direct questionnaires (Appendix B) to four blind rural agricultural workers in their particular area. This procedure was followed because this writer was unable to gain access to a list of names and addresses of blind agricultural workers. From an analysis of the returned questionnaires and a survey of material already published, an attempt is made to set forth some of the general attitudes that appear to be current among the blind, especially those who are already engaged in agricultural pursuits.

The community

By the term "Community" is meant both individual and organized forces that affect the degree of success in any area of rehabilitation. Except in a general fashion, community attitudes have

not been easy to assess. Returns from the inquiries failed to give much help along this line. The approach to this part of the study is made mostly through a review of already published material.

Agencies serving the blind

Attitudes and practices on the part of agencies for the blind have a vast influence on the position of rural rehabilitation. The majority of persons disabled by blindness must depend upon organized support of one kind or another for assistance in the pursuit of rehabilitation goals. Agency attitudes not only affect direction of counseling the client, but serve as a major force in the formation of community concepts and attitudes. Because of the importance of agency attitudes, letters were sent to 54 agencies serving the blind (Appendix C). They were asked to summarize their ideas and practices as related to rural rehabilitation.

Fundamental factors

An attempt is made to review four fundamental factors important in the rehabilitation of blind individuals in agricultural pursuits. They are counseling, training, resources for material assistance to rehabilitants, and placement procedures. The approach will essentially be in terms of existing agency operational procedure. Material for the review will include questionnaires returned by agencies for the blind and publications.

CHAPTER II

FUNDAMENTAL FACTORS IN THE REHABILITATION OF THE BLIND

There are four fundamental factors that are usually encountered in the rehabilitation of the blind. They are counseling, training, utilization of resources, and placement in employment. These factors will be reviewed in this chapter because they influence the vocational goals of many blind individuals interested in agricultural occupations.

The Counseling Factor

Cholden (4) defines counseling as a form of human helping in which the counselee attains different forms of satisfactions from those he knew before. The ideal goal of counseling is that instance in which the client is helped to utilize his potentialities to the maximum and attains optimal satisfaction from life.

A professional worker in the field of counseling the blind must take into consideration three restrictions due to blindness. Donahue and Dabelstein (8, pp. 35-38) identify them as: restriction in range and variety of attitudes; restriction in ability to get about; and restriction in the control of the environment. These

restrictions modify the employability of some blind persons more than others.

With respect to the first restriction Donahue and Dabelstein express the opinion that blind persons must build up their conception of the world by relying almost exclusively upon tactual and auditory perceptions and kinesthetic experiences. They state that because of motion, intangibles, fluctuation of form, temperatures, etc., blind persons who have never experienced vision have difficulty understanding and appreciating the world in which they live.

Restrictions in the ability to get about implies a two-fold handicap in that it limits locomotion and imposes dependence upon assistance from others. When the blind person leaves the sheltered life of his home to enter the social and economic world of the seeing, these restrictions carry new implications. A blind person with sufficient initiative can do much to minimize these restrictions by practicing the art of following directions, by using a white cane or guide dog, and by developing self-reliance.

Donahue and Dabelstein do not seem to fully explain what is meant by the term "restriction in the control of the environment." This writer assumes they have reference to the fact that because of blindness a person may be limited in the selection of available work opportunities and the people with whom he must be associated.

The professional counselor must be aware of individual differences among the blind as well as their right to maintain their

individual identity. The counselor needs to keep in mind that a blind person holds pre-conceived ideas about the blind and will be struggling to free himself of being so identified. The initial step in the counseling process may be to survey the extent of damage these attitudes have brought upon the blind individual. In such instances the professional worker's responsibility is to help the person to an acceptance of his own limitations as well as to an awareness that society has fixed ideas about what the blind can and cannot do. Accepting this framework and working within it the individual stands a better chance of demonstrating that he can take his place in society.

In their writings Donahue and Dabelstein (8, p. 143) mentioned that the methods used in interpreting services to a potential client depends largely upon the philosophy and system of the professional counselor. The counselor should keep in mind that independence is the client's ultimate goal. The counselor will be able to function more effectively if he recognizes three basic premises necessary for good counseling, namely: one must have a deep respect for people; one must recognize that every person has potential strengths; one must recognize that people grow by doing things for themselves and discovering their own power.

With respect to specific counseling, Pindells (22) advised that at least one home visit, preferably the initial interview, should be held in the client's home. The family must be a part of the

rehabilitation process. This is a way to include them in the planning at the beginning. Many intangible factors are observed during the home visit that might not be revealed otherwise. They include: qualities of others in the home; degree of the client's dependency on other family members; deference to the opinion of other family members; judgment of family members of the client; helpfulness of other members relative to help in the client's rehabilitation; interpersonal attitudes; any attitudes of whether the family expects the world owes the client a living; economic status as seen in the physical structure in the home; and qualities found at home such as personal care. Such factors help one to formulate a better diagnosis than one could have determined from test results or through an interview elsewhere.

Leaders in the field of rehabilitation like Merton Lake (17) have long advocated that rural rehabilitation is a problem that requires of the counselor special knowledge of rural life. He also believes that in order to make an intelligent approach to the problem, a counselor should have sufficient rural knowledge to enable him properly to evaluate the background of the person interested in agricultural activity.

A few rural rehabilitation project failures, according to Lake, will tend to destroy confidence in the rural rehabilitation program. Careful selection is necessary. Requirements should be the willingness

of the client to help himself, willingness to make some sacrifices, and above all willingness to follow directions. Success on the farm demands considerable intelligence, patience, and lots of hard work. Furthermore, if the client is married, the wife must really want to help and not merely take advantage of any help offered.

One of the most active specialists in the area of rural rehabilitation of the blind has been George Owens (21), Counselor on the staff of Services for the Blind in the State of Mississippi. He stated that in the eagerness to serve clients, agencies have too many times yielded to the temptation to enter into an undertaking without giving sufficient thought to certain standards or guiding factors that should be followed when considering a visually handicapped person for a rural venture. Mr. Owens has set forth these standards based upon his experience:

1. Amount of vision required for the job. This must be determined by means of some kind of job analysis. A counselor is simply kidding himself when he holds to the belief that a blind person can perform just any job.
2. Does the client have sufficient vision for operation of the job? This is a matter of comparing the amount of vision possessed by the client with the visual requirements of the particular type of work.
3. Is the client interested in farm work? This is the prime requisite. If the client is interested further possibilities should be explored. If he is not interested further consideration in some other area should be pursued.
4. Is additional help required for operation of the job? This is essential from the standpoint of cost of operation. The cost of hiring help may render the venture an unprofitable enterprise.

5. Does the client have this additional help available, such as his family? If he does, the project is more likely to be successful.
6. Type of rural pursuit to be followed. This must be considered in light of the client's experience, location, real property available, etc.
7. Amount of finances required for operation of the project. Assessment of this is dictated by what is required to function, what the client already has, and what remains to be provided.
8. Does the client have access to these finances? If not, are there possibilities for obtaining or arranging for financing either personally or through some lending organization, commercial or governmental.
9. Equipment needed. This also is dictated by the type of operation desired by the client such as dairy, poultry, beekeeping, etc.
10. Can equipment be secured? This relates to availability of equipment and means of acquiring through purchase.
11. Location of farm as to community, soil, market, transportation and farm leaders. The location will have much to do with success of the farmer. If it is located in or near a progressive community, then the farmer is more likely to be progressive. If the soil is poor, then production will be poor. If transportation and market is poor, then there will be no stabilized market. If there are no farm leaders to assist, then agency efforts as well as the client's energies will probably be fruitless.

Chappel (24, pp. 17-18) of the Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation has substantiated the guiding principles offered by Mr. Owens. In addition he believes the prospective blind farmer must be able to assume responsibility. Also he believes he should be able to work without directions, be inclined toward self-improvement

through study, have the ability to experiment with new ideas, and have no objection to long hard hours doing dirty work. From a financial standpoint Chappel emphasized the importance of a blind farmer's knowing how to handle money and ability to stand reverses. He must be able to understand reverses in relation to conditions beyond his control. Finally, it is important for the person to be willing to wait a certain period before profits can be realized.

One other active person in the field, Mr. Preuss (23, pp. 93-94), has stated that one very important asset, on the part of professional workers for the blind in the counseling area, is to be able to recognize the vast number of project combinations to be found in agriculture. This asset together with training, experience, and patience should accomplish what the blind hope for in the area of agricultural pursuits.

Of primary concern to most of the agencies that reported for the study is the risk involved in rural rehabilitation projects because of their usual high cost. A review of the returned questionnaires shows that those agencies that regularly rehabilitate several blind persons in agricultural occupations generally dispute the high element of risk when compared with placements in other areas of employment. The Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (7, pp. 22-24) is aware that agencies will be less hesitant about rural vocational plans if project failures are minimized. They have, therefore, recommended that before an agency makes its

final decision to launch upon a rural project in behalf of a client,

these final points should be reviewed:

1. Are the client and his family convinced that they like living the country and that they want to farm?
2. Is the category of farm work selected suitable for the client, and is the particular project chosen a feasible undertaking?
3. Is the type of farm work chosen compatible with the client's general health and eye condition?
4. Is there a training facility available and is it equipped to meet the needs of the client?
5. What are the sources from which the client can obtain technical information, advice, and financial assistance?
6. Have all costs of stocking and equipping the farm project been considered, and will it provide a living for the client?
7. Can the client perform the duties of the operation efficiently and profitably with his degree of vision, or should he be provided with sighted assistance?
8. What is the attitude of the family, and are its members willing to assist him when necessary?
9. Would it be advantageous or wise to equip any portion of the farm with orientation devices which would aid the blind person in his travel; thus enabling him to perform his duties more easily and profitably?
10. Should your client or the facilities he is to use be equipped with aids or devices which would enable him to perform his work more readily and with a minimum of sighted assistance?
11. Would additional training of any type make him more advantageously employable?

12. Is the locality in which your client is to operate provided with available recreation centers, schools, churches, transportation, and shopping facilities?
13. Do the client and his family have social contacts and do they participate in community activities?

In conclusion it must be said, as pointed out by Routh (27), that the best possible vocational diagnosis resulting from counseling is of value only if the client has been a part of the process all the way along, and if the final decisions are his own. Motley (6) substantiated this when he emphasized that the only ideas people fully understand are those they have helped to formulate and which they come to accept as their own. In order for a person to understand and hence follow a plan, it must be his plan. Telling the client what his plan should be and how he should accomplish it will usually be ineffective.

The Training Factor

Hamilton (10, pp. 160-62) says, "Vocational training imparts the knowledge and skills necessary to performance. It is differentiated from other types of rehabilitation training in that it provides specific occupational knowledge and skills required within the occupation." He continues by saying, "in general, there are two ways of gaining vocational skills:

1. Formal methods. Trade schools, technical colleges, tutorial methods, apprenticeships, and correspondence courses.
2. Informal methods. Observation, informal study, or any other kind of trial-and-error procedure which may be improvised."

Training the rehabilitant

A plan of action directed toward a vocational objective for a blind individual often calls for training by either the formal or informal method. This occurs because the event of blindness usually necessitates re-training. One of the paramount problems of training blind persons in agricultural occupations has been the finding of training facilities where individuals are qualified to provide training, and willing to do so.

A review of the literature has shown that as early as 1870 sporadic attempts have been made in this country to establish formal training facilities exclusively for the blind. Efforts to create specialized agricultural training opportunities for the blind have been even more rare. History records that only a few of these ventures have survived. There are those who believe that specialized attempts of this nature fail to be successful because blind people usually do not wish to be set apart as a special group. Two recent attempts will be cited as examples of the effort to provide formal agricultural training.

At the request of the Texas State Commission for the Blind (19), the Texas A. and M. College operated a nine months course

in poultry husbandry for the blind in 1945-46. It was believed to have been the first of its kind in the United States. The class had an enrollment of eight students. It was the plan of the college to continue the course. Under date of March 4, 1957, the college advised this writer that the course was discontinued after one year.

Possibly the first effort to provide organized farm training for the blind (3), came about at Henniker, New Hampshire, in 1942, with the establishment of the Barnes Agricultural School for the Blind. With the closing of the school after five years because of finances, the Cincinnati Association for the Blind felt impelled to fill the gap and, therefore, opened a Farm School at Mason, Ohio.

Mr. Calvin S. Glover (9), Executive Director for the Cincinnati Association for the Blind, and his associates recognized that development of industrial opportunities for the blind is important but those occupations fail to give a full measure of satisfaction to many ambitious persons in rural environments. It was this guiding thought that led the Association to take action. The school accepted its first students in October 1949, and is continuing its operation.

The objectives of this Cincinnati Farm School are: to conduct tests and experimental projects which will help the blind student to evaluate his capabilities; to stimulate the highest efficiency in a blind worker by guiding him in any adjustment training and orientation that he may need; and to train the blind student

in rural occupations so that he may graduate as a fully capable farm worker, or as a manager of his own farm.

The farm school accepts only persons who are within the accepted definition of blindness. After a trial period of two months, a decision is made as to whether or not the student's training should be continued. During this early period, and to a lesser degree during the remainder of the training program, the student takes part in general farm activities as well as in his specialized field.

The general course of the school is balanced between classroom work and learning through practical experience and guidance on the job. Major emphasis is placed on poultry and dairy husbandry. The two courses combined require about nine months training. Agricultural specialists are brought in as lecturers. Periodic field trips are conducted to other commercial farms. The school is also equipped to provide training to students interested in the raising of hogs, sheep, rabbits, and the growing of orchards and small fruits. The school has proudly reported that a number of their most successful graduates have been blind persons with no previous rural background.

Programs providing rehabilitation services to the blind have had to devise multitudinous informal methods of providing agricultural training because of the absence of formal opportunities. One of the usual procedures has been to try to find a local farmer

who would be willing to provide on-the-job training. Individually arranged short term specialty training courses have been made available at some of the agricultural colleges. Short term tutorial instruction has met the need in many instances where only a fairly brief learning experience is required. When believed feasible, blind persons with rural background have often been established on projects and periodic consultative service has been rendered by specialists such as the county agricultural agent. Providing adequate informal rural training for clients demands considerable time and careful planning on the part of counselors.

Training agency staff

In their publication the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (24, p. 5) holds the belief that there are opportunities for the blind in rural agriculture. They state that one of the best ways to stimulate more interest in rural rehabilitation throughout the country and territories is to encourage qualified institutions to hold training courses for counselors of the blind who devote all or part of their time in the rehabilitation of blind persons in rural areas. The national agency's premise is that wide-spread education will be the strongest force toward the development of greater rural opportunities for the blind.

The objectives of the institutionally sponsored training courses are to furnish counselors for the blind with information on:

the services and facilities available to farmers which may be used to supplement the services provided by vocational rehabilitation; special methods and techniques used by blind persons in performing the tasks required of persons doing farm work; farming activities of a diversified and special nature which have been successfully performed by persons without sight; methods used in determining the category of farm work for which individual blind persons are suited; and methods used in establishing businesses in rural areas.

Beatrice Jones (13) illustrated the effectiveness of these staff training courses in her article about Omar L. Miron, Counselor for the Wisconsin agency for the blind. Following his training Mr. Miron developed a three-step rural rehabilitation procedure which has helped him in the development of rural opportunities for the blind.

Research in client training procedures

Research efforts have not kept pace with developments in the field of rehabilitation of the blind until the passage of Public Law 565, by Congress in 1954. As of June 1956 there were 26 special research projects for the blind being inaugurated throughout the country under financial sponsorship of the Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Mr. J. Hiram Chappel (24, pp. 28-29) reported that three were specifically designed for the rural blind. All three are concerned with training aspects.

The first of the three projects described by Mr. Chappel was the Ohio project. The main purpose of this project has been to explore the possibilities of establishing a pattern that may be used for selecting different combinations of farming activities which are appropriate and profitable when performed by persons without sight, and which may be adapted for use in all parts of the country and territories. In planning and organizing the project, advice has been sought from specialists in universities and schools of agriculture. In conducting the experiments, professional consultants have been engaged to assist the instructors on the project.

Second of the three was the Georgia greenhouse and nursery project (25 and 26). Its objective has been to try to discover methods of instruction for acquainting blind persons with effective methods of greenhouse operation and to devise ways and means by which persons with little or no sight may achieve the same objectives as persons with sight. In conducting the research, use has been made of specialists and consultants from institutions teaching horticulture, and successful operators of commercial greenhouses. The procedure has involved a combination of formal instruction and on-the-job performance. The participants included students and adults giving indication of having aptitude and interest in the area of greenhouse and nursery work.

The third project described by Mr. Chappel was conducted in Alabama. It has been experimentally designed to bring together

in a composite unit, existing farm agencies which may be used to supplement services provided by an agency program for the blind. The project has been organized as a combination farm restoration and vocational rehabilitation program, whereby "farm and farmer" might be rehabilitated concurrently. The experiment has involved the attempt to rehabilitate six blind persons, and restore six farms (three tenant farms and three farms owned by blind persons). Three of the individuals have been reported to be totally blind, and the others within the definition of blindness but having some sight. Mr. Chappel stated that reports on all three research projects will be available to the public when they are completed.

Utilization of Resources

Agencies providing rural rehabilitation services to the blind usually have legal, administrative, or appropriation limitations on the use and amount of funds that can be spent on a particular client. Individuals who come to an agency for services often do so because they have exhausted their financial resources. One of the crucial factors in rural rehabilitation is the utilization of resources to supplement what the agency and client cannot provide. Among these are: planning and development resources; loan and finance resources, both government and commercial; and community social resources.

In the rehabilitation process the counselor can aid in the exploration and approach to resources, but the client must

ultimately utilize them in his own fashion and at his own discretion.

Planning and development resources

Each county in the United States is served by a County Agricultural Agent. One of the important functions of such a professional person is to work with all kinds of people. Mr. Beard (2, pp. 77-79) who is a professional agriculturist has said that from the viewpoint of the county agricultural agent the approach to rendering assistance to blind farmers is no different from that of any other group. Upon receipt of a request for services, the agent would first survey the entire situation. This is true of any project, person, or group that a county agent works with. He must determine what are the capabilities of the person, his likes and dislikes, and the kind of tools he has to work with. The county agent must evaluate other factors such as whether the land and buildings are adapted to the kind of project in mind; the need for credit to start and conduct the venture; the availability of extra labor at the right time if needed; and most important, a profitable market for the products produced. Assistance can also be given by the agent in the planning of such things as layout of buildings, equipment needs, layout of fields in order to save steps, and safety devices and conveniences that will increase the efficiency of the operation.

Through consultation, the county agent can train the blind farmer to anticipate what will happen to his crops and livestock, and to take preventive measures before trouble occurs.

Another planning and development resource that may be utilized is the Soil Conservation Service of the government. It would appear that the services of the county agricultural agent and staff of the Soil Conservation Service overlap somewhat. They work very closely together. The representative from the Soil Conservation Service is often in a position to offer more detailed and prolonged service to the blind farmer in those areas in which he is qualified to serve.

Soil Conservation services to the individual blind farmer, according to Kansas State College (24, pp. 42), can include the development of an individual plan designed to make best use of the land. Such a plan considers physical resources, interests, abilities, and financial status of the blind farmer. Land uses to determine crop production and permanent vegetation are prime factors. A determination of the land treatment is made considering control of erosion through terracing, grass seeding, crop management, irrigation, and drainage and woods management. Any plan offered by the service is designed for voluntary participation by the blind individual. All of these are actual on-the-site services which include surveying, stake-out, engineering, and application of earth

moving principles for soil conservation. The services set forth and suggested are those which are known to be possible for the farmer to perform for himself.

George Stewart (39, p. 77) has especially urged blind farmers to become acquainted with their State Department of Agriculture. The title of the agency varies in different states, but its headquarters are usually to be found in the capital city of the state. It is an excellent source of information on almost any phase of rural activity, and stands ready to provide enumerable services.

Advisory committees are occasionally used on a local basis as a means of pooling and utilizing several resources for planning and development purposes. The Alabama Agency for the Blind (Appendix) has described its use of this resource in the following way:

We have been successful in organizing an advisory committee composed of one member of each of the agricultural agencies in the client's home county. This committee has helped plan a long-time farming program for the client. In addition to the services secured from the agriculture agencies, we are asking that the local teacher of vocational agriculture work with our clients as he would with any adult farmer.

Loans and finance resources

Mr. Fred Ward (24, p. 38), a successful blind farmer, has set forth some sound advice with respect to seeking financial help from any kind of lending agency or organization. He emphasizes that the lending agencies are interested in completeness of planning a

a project. This is particularly true when the individual is blind. If the plan clearly indicates the anticipated steps and the objective to be reached, the lending agency is far more receptive to investing funds.

The blind person himself is the best resource and should be encouraged to take the initiative in financing. By doing so the person is not encouraged to enter into debt beyond his ability to handle it, and also is less likely to plunge into debt beyond what the project might warrant. Lending agencies prefer that the blind person have an equity in the project, since personal financial participation tends to create greater personal interest and ties the person closer to the venture.

Among the federal agencies (24, pp. 34-36) available for making loans to blind farmers are the Federal Land Bank, Farm Credit Administration, and Farmers Home Administration.

The Federal Land Bank grants loans for almost any agricultural purpose except emergencies. Loans are made to persons engaged in farming whose principle income is from farming, and who have substantial control of their farm. Appraisal of the farm and credit reputation of the farmer are the determining factors in consideration of a loan. Up to 65 percent of the appraised value of the property can be loaned to the borrower. This source of credit is less likely to be available to the blind person because of the

loan stipulations. Usually the blind person who has need of financial help is just trying to get started, therefore, neither owns his property nor has established credit rating.

The production Credit Association (name of the local unit of the Farm Credit Administration) is a cooperative which is farmer owned and farmer controlled. The borrower must own stock in the amount of five percent of his maximum loan. There are annual operating loans for sound farm ventures, and intermediate loans which may be needed for a farm purpose that will cover several seasons. All loans are granted on a year to year basis. Interest rate is determined by cost of money on the open market. Loans may be either secured or non-secured. The blind farmer who has developed a going concern is in a position to participate in this organization for the purpose of later financial help should such a need develop.

Perhaps the most important source of aid to the blind is the Farmers Home Administration because its services encompass more of the usual needs of the blind farmer who is making his initial start. In his description of the agency's services, Mr. T. P. Shreve (28, pp. 79-81), Insured Mortgage Specialist of Washington, D.C., stated that there are two important eligibility factors: first, the applicant must be or plan to be actively engaged in some kind of agriculture; second, credit is available only to those persons who

cannot get credit elsewhere. The Farmers Home Administration definitely is not in competition with banks and other lending institutions.

Mr. Shreve outlined the agency's three major programs. They are operating loans, farm ownership programs, and housing loans.

Operating loans are available to buy feed, seed, equipment, livestock, etc. Up to \$7,000 can be loaned. The interest rate is five percent per annum and the borrower has seven years in which to pay the loan.

Farm ownership program loans are available to purchase, enlarge, or develop family-type farms. Loans of this nature are available to those who already own farms, to tenants, responsible sharecroppers, and others who have demonstrated their ability and wish to buy family-type farms. This type of loan is amortized over 40 years at four and one half percent interest. Borrowers must get their loans refinanced through commercial channels just as soon as they are eligible for such credit.

Farm housing loans are made to farm owners. The loans can be used for construction and repair of houses or other necessary farm buildings. Loans are made for a period of up to 33 years at four percent interest.

There are also four other specialty and emergency types of loans which ordinarily would be of limited interest to many blind farmers.

Mr. Shreve reported that his agency has made loans to handicapped people including the blind. The important thing to keep in mind, he concluded, is that the program is designed to help families through loans and guidance. It does not make outright grants. Funds borrowed must be used for specific purposes and the loans plus interest must be repaid.

In practically every community there are financing sources and systems of unusual nature that may be tapped. Discovery and utilization of small single and combination resources calls for initiative on the part of both client and professional worker. Some of these potential resources include feed dealers, creameries, farm co-ops, packing plants, local nurseries, civic groups, and interested individuals. Quite often cash or material loans from these sources carry no interest charge. Limited bank credit may be explored but usually entails putting up collateral of some kind.

For the exclusive benefit of the blind there is a fund known as the Jamison Loan Fund administered by the American Foundation for the Blind. The Foundation is able to loan a maximum of \$300 to blind persons for the purpose of expanding their earning power. These loans, which cannot be used for personal expenses, are on a two year basis at no interest charge and payable on a monthly or quarterly plan.

Social benefit resources

Blind agriculturists have long discovered that they cannot be isolationists. They must be effective members of the farm community if they expect to be successful. Organizations such as the Grange, Farmers Union and Farm Bureau become resources for social benefits and development of valuable contacts. Many educational opportunities come to the blind farmer by group participation in these orders which would not be available to him as an individual.

Placement in Agriculture

Placement means entering into employment. It means placement on the job either as a farm hand or as operator of an agricultural enterprise. Hamilton (10, p. 165) has said, "from the standpoint of the client, placement is the proof of the pudding. If, in his "eyes", his rehabilitation experience does not add up to sufficient capacity to enable him to achieve satisfactory placement, then he rightfully questions the value of the whole effort." Most devastating of all experiences are perhaps, those where a blind person's skills and capacities are not understood or accepted. When employment is sought by a blind person and he is denied the opportunity to earn a livelihood, that person is needlessly made a victim of society's mass prejudices.

From the standpoint of the agency, Hamilton points out that the degree of the attainment of the placement goal is a yardstick for measuring the social value of the services which society has made available. Placement success is a measure of rehabilitation success. No rehabilitation process is complete which does not eventuate in placement of the highest quality which the client's circumstances will permit.

Mention is made throughout this study of the reluctance of society to avail opportunities to the blind. Basically pride and fear are the two factors, according to Donahue and Dabelstein (8, p. 53), that prevent employers from hiring blind workers. This is in addition to negative advertising about the blind. Unfortunately too many employers categorize each blind person with all others. Both the public, and employers, need to be educated on these points: first, comprehension is lost only with loss of mind, and certainly not with the loss of sight; second, a person's ability to earn a living depends upon his mentality, energy, and the confidence of the community; third, all persons, including blind and sighted, are limited in abilities and activities; fourth, each person is entitled to the same ambitions, social, and economic standards regardless of blindness.

Placement of agricultural wage earners

Hiram Chappel (24, p. 23) has stated that comparatively little effort has been expended in the field of placing the visually handicapped in farm jobs when contrasted to the big job that remains to be done for the blind. The best approach to this problem is the same as the placement of visually handicapped in farm operator situations. Success in the first few attempts to place blind farm workers in a community can do much to enhance future progress. It is extremely important to be selective in filling early openings with well qualified blind workers.

The United States Employment Service (12, p. 63) has suggested that well qualified workers should include those persons who are in good health, agile, and probably had previous work experience on a farm, although this last qualification is not absolutely necessary. The agency has also suggested that the characteristics of a job be discussed with the county agricultural agent.

In a training institute at Kansas State College, Chappel (24, p. 23) reported that evidence abounds throughout all areas of our country that totally blind and partially sighted persons are gainfully employed in numerous types of rural jobs. He related the example that on the Pacific coast many blind persons and their families follow the agricultural season from south to north, and all over the country. The blind member works side by side with the sighted in a great variety of activities including hand picking

to packaging of fruits and vegetables, loading hay sleds and filling hay mows, assembling and filling crates and boxes, unloading into grading bins, setting out celery and broccoli, sewing sacks in the grain harvest, and foot tramping in the planting process.

In past years the favored agricultural opportunities for the blind have been in the fields of poultry raising and dairying. It seems that mobility has been the principal consideration in this direction. Actual performance in these two areas has indicated that a well qualified blind worker should be able to do about 75 percent of the chores involved in both operations.

Merton Lake (16, pp. 118-20) has said that all professional counselors concerned with placements should be aware that when a blind man is placed in agricultural work it should be a steady job rather than one which would change with economic cycles. There should always be a place for those who have demonstrated their ability to do the work. There should be no fear of the ability of an intelligent blind man to do farm work if he has had proper training even though he may not have had a previous farm background.

One of the problems of placing blind rural workers is the lack of understanding among farmers as to just how much the blind can do. Lake (15) stated that the farmer must have called to his attention that blind workers are available and can function in this kind of work. The farm press can be used to drive this fact home to the agriculturists.

Continuing with Lake's writings, he has said that before placing a blind worker on a farm, investigation should be made to make certain that living conditions will be pleasant, and that he will be a respected member of the farm team. If the worker is given congenial living conditions and a happy family life he will soon win a place for himself, and will prove his worth to the farmer.

On the other hand, Lake (16, pp. 113-26) brought forth that the whole matter of placement must also be approached from the viewpoint of the sighted farmer and his problems. It is not right to expect him to be an institution of benevolence. It is reasonable to expect the blind worker to be a good business proposition for the farmer if the interest of the latter is to be aroused. For both parties this implies a full day's wage for a full day's work.

Lake speculated that the best results are likely to be obtained if blind workers are placed on small family farms rather than on large commercial farms where it is impossible for the owner to give close personal supervision.

Anyone placing a blind rural worker should follow up closely to assure mutual satisfaction on the part of the worker and farmer. The placement is more likely to be permanent if someone with a knowledge of the farmer's problems can spend some time with the worker until he is adjusted to new conditions. There should be no need for special tools, gadgets, wires, and special aids in getting about the place. The worker should be guided around the buildings

once or twice and then be left free to establish his own routes for himself. It should be pointed out to the farmer that the worker should not need to be led from one job to another. Certainly it is not right to expect the farmer to train the blind man.

In conclusion Lake emphasized the fact that it requires intelligence to be a good farm worker and in the attempt to rehabilitate a blind person it is easy to lose sight of this fact. If, after a reasonable trial, a worker does not prove satisfactory he should be removed. The result of leaving him after the farmer is dissatisfied may mean he will become opposed to the employment of blind workers.

Placement of farm operators

The approach to the placement of blind farm operators is much the same as that which has been described above for farm wage earners. However, a few comparisons between the two types of placements may be made.

1. One of the factors that has enhanced the placement of blind farm operators has been the opportunity for many of them to operate in a family unit with all parties of the family cooperating to make the project work. The success or failure of the wage earner usually depends entirely upon his individual ability.
2. Placement of a farm operator usually involves a large initial expenditure of money. Costs for the rehabilitation of a wage earner are usually involved in the preparation for the location of employment.
3. Successful placement of a farm operator is likely to be permanent. Wage earners are less likely to be permanent because of personal reasons and changing economic conditions.

CHAPTER III

BASIC ATTITUDES OBSERVED IN THE STUDY

Individual Attitudes

Initial reaction to blindness is very much the same all over the world. Cultural differences tend to affect the magnitude of the seriousness of the disability and thus influence the process of adjustment. This is important because well over 50 percent of the blind lose their sight after reaching adulthood. Donahue and Dabelstein (14, pp. 41-43) have reported that the average newly blinded person's thinking and feeling about the blind is, in the initial stages, similar to that of the sighted world. The only difference is that he now identifies himself with the blind, and instead of thinking "the blind are," he thinks and feels "I am blind." The full impact of this identification invariably causes a severe emotional shock. The reaction of the newly blinded person to shock usually results in forms of withdrawal, regression, and often hostility.

Dr. Cholden of the Kansas Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (4) has added that in blindness the eyes are the least part of the person that is affected. Mainly, the inner person is altered. His aspirations, interpersonal relationships, his body image, his

concept of self, and concept of his relationship to the physical world are strongly affected, if not completely changed. Dr. Cholden stated that it is basic to any rehabilitation or readjustment toward the utilization of his potentialities, that the blinded person recognize this change in himself. The recognition of the need for this large-scale intra-psychic change is what is implied in the apparently limited expression, "the psychological acceptance of the new self which has a disability." This basic change in the internal psychological structure of the handicapped person is primary; it must take place before he can effectively accomplish all of the new learning that is essential for his future development.

There is common belief among many professional workers for the blind that psychological acceptance of blindness often comes more readily and with greater ease among rural individuals who experience the loss of sight. The writer has found no published material to substantiate the general belief. However, if the assumption be true, the secret of it might well be found in the words of MacIver (18) who once said:

It is certain that a purely urban culture, divorced from the sources of inspiration which the life of the country contains, would be fundamentally unbalanced and spiritually impoverished. The country has the secret of permanence. It leads man beyond the circle of humanity, into the vision of the majestic forces of nature and into the presence of the teeming interdependent life of plant and animal, of the mightier pattern of which his own life, for all the power of his civilization, is but a part. It offers the ageless wonders of life, beside which all the works of man's hands are puny, and pretentious, and ephemeral. It

reveals, for those who can "see" and hear them, an infinitude of forms, colors, harmonies, and rhythms which may bring constant renewal and fresh inspiration to the arts of man.

Community Attitudes Toward Blindness

Hector Chevigny (8, p. 49), author of several books and a radio producer (himself blind) has made the following statement:

Toward the blind the world presents a face it turns to no other group on earth. Everyone else must struggle for his existence and must fight for his survival. The blind, however, need not want. Society, profoundly convinced of the utter helplessness of the man who lost his sight, stands ever ready to help him whether his need be so small a thing as crossing the street or the larger one of food and shelter for the rest of his days. All this is to the world's credit; it would seem, to say the least, in poor taste to find fault with it. But in human kindness there is a paradox; that which it seeks to help it can also destroy.

To the man on the street Chevigny's thinking may carry with it a tone of cynicism. Nevertheless, his remarks have borne a great truth especially concerning the past.

Himes (11) observed that it is possible to piece together three fairly consistent cultural constructs about the blind, namely: the blind beggar, blind genius, and the superstition of sensory compensation. The blind beggar is pictured as a cautious, timid, and defeated man. He has the cards stacked against him and is whipped daily by life in a world of seeing people. He is envisioned as one who has retired from the struggle, and has surrendered to dependency. The blind genius is a rarity. He is generally characterized by absence of most of the traditional symbols

of blindness. He is thought of as possessing extraordinary talents and unique character. He may be a judge, college professor, or a successful lawyer. The third construct, sensory compensation, entertains the widespread notion that the loss of sight is organically compensated for by increased acuteness of other major senses.

Himes pointed out that attitudes change as a result of experience and social change. This has been significantly true during the past 20 years in the United States, so much so that the cultural constructs set forth by Himes are, as observed by this writer, beginning to lose their identity. They have begun to fuse into a more homogeneous grouping that might be termed the average. The blind beggar is rapidly disappearing as a construct because society is seeing less of him. Our culture is recognizing the responsibility for meeting the basic needs of the indigent in a manner that enables them to maintain self respect. This has largely been accomplished through social welfare programs. There is speculation that the time may well come when the community need never be aware of the economic dependency of a blind person.

Much remains to be done with respect to improvement of community attitudes about the blind. Joseph F. Clunk, former Chief of Services for the Blind for the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (5), observed that one of the major objectives of our

time is the establishment of confidence of the sighted public in the abilities of blind persons. Such confidence is established only by success, and lack of it is perpetuated by failure.

Clunk also emphasized that the blind of tomorrow are the sighted persons of today. As we collectively develop occupations and incomes for blind persons of today, we educate the blind persons of tomorrow and they will come to us with less despair, less hopelessness, and with a realization that they can continue in some phase, if not in complete performance, of their normal occupations.

The public asks a very simple question with considerable frequency. "What can a blind person do?" Actually the answer to the community is simply another question which is "What will you let the blind person do?" Clunk expressed the belief that when the community will approach the problem of any specific blind person from an analytical point of view and try to find ways and means of helping that individual perform familiar tasks, progress will really be made. Far too much time and energy is spent trying to show that blindness is a total disability.

Pointing up individual situations is an important approach toward the improvement of community attitudes about the blind according to Preuss. He indicates (23) that there is no better public interpretation of the work of a blind farmer than successful

operation of a project. The visually disabled must see himself as a productive part of the community. He must provide something in the way of services for his neighbors. Participation in the various farm organizations will aid the individual in becoming a part of the community.

Preuss expressed the viewpoint that the public eventually sees a particular blind individual as one able to accomplish what was once believed to be nearly impossible. Once there is this recognition, the extension agent, high school agriculture instructor, and others will be glad to cooperate with the blind farmer in any way possible. Other farmers are then willing to exchange work tasks with him such as putting up hay.

That segment of the community which exercises the most profound effect upon the blind person is his immediate family. Sir Arthur Pearson (1) once remarked that, "almost invariably the worst enemies the blinded soldiers have are their own loving wives or mothers." Anderson (1) summarized the problem adequately. In her writings she said that fundamental to the welfare of the blind person are the attitudes of the immediate family. Family attitudes play perhaps the most important role with respect to developing proper thinking on the part of the blind individual. If a professional worker who is working with a blind individual can succeed in bringing about a fairly satisfactory recognition by the family members that their blind member is not helpless, that

he does not need overprotection, that he can pursue a vocation, then the impact of preconceived concepts will be less destructive to the family and to the blind person.

In her article, Anderson commented further that by far the majority of family members are sincere in wanting to adopt the attitudes that will be most helpful to their blind relative. Most of them have never been closely associated with a blind individual. Accordingly they function within the concepts that are thought to be socially acceptable. It is here that a professional worker can aid the blind person and his family through guidance to constructive thinking.

Agency Attitudes About Rural Rehabilitation of the Blind

Agency attitudes may be better understood by mentioning in this section some observations made by Joseph F. Clunk, Chief of Services for the Blind in the Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation ten years ago, and followed with viewpoints of Hiram Chappel in 1956 who is now with the same Federal agency.

In the opinion of Clunk (5), the rehabilitation of the blinded farmer and his return to normal functioning on the farm is a more nearly complete and natural rehabilitation than is achieved with most persons in any other activity. Rural people are already familiar with their trade. Usually the only thing this group lacks is confidence in its ability to perform farm tasks without sight. The job at hand

for any agency serving the blind is to aid them in eliminating fear and to develop a little imagination in finding ways and means of solving particular problems.

Clunk pointed out that agencies can render services to older persons and to a larger number of individuals in assisting them to return to their rural activities than can be rendered to any other group of rehabilitants. He supported the statement by drawing attention to the fact that there are comparatively few instances where an employer must be found, and it is not necessary to be concerned with Workmen's Compensation, production rates, and complicated urban transportation.

He concluded by stating that agency staffs have devoted most of their time to services in urban areas. If fears of rural people are to be neutralized and their confidence improved, agencies are going to have to employ staff workers who understand rural problems. In 1947, nine states were employing specialists who devoted their entire time to rural rehabilitation. Their results were beginning to show that rehabilitation benefits can be given the farmer on the same basis and perhaps with even more lasting results than are produced in urban areas.

Regarding farm work as a suitable category of employment for the blind J. Hiram Chappel, Rehabilitation Specialist for the Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (24, pp. 17-19), reported that there is still very little success in this area up to June 1956.

Chappel reported that when rehabilitation got under way the emphasis was primarily on industrial placements. Rural placement has been and still is neglected, not only for the blind, but for the entire population. Chappel insisted that thinking must not be, "it can't be done," because it is being done as evidenced by the approximately 4,000 blind currently engaged in rural activity. The writer finds that Chappel did not specify what portion of that number are specifically engaged in agricultural pursuits--the area to which this study is devoted.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS COMPILED FROM QUESTIONNAIRES

Some Attitudes and Reactions of Blind Agricultural Workers

The attitudes and reactions of blind rural agricultural workers observed and mentioned here have been extracted from 18 completed questionnaires received from blind farmers in 12 states and territories (Table I).

Background and entry into agriculture

All 18 farm workers operate their own projects. None of the returns are from wage earners working only for another person. Twelve of the group were raised on a farm, five of whom have remained there and continued to operate the home place after loss of sight. The other seven who were originally raised on a farm returned to agriculture after encountering blindness. Six of the individuals reporting were not raised on a farm but have entered suitable rural pursuits since becoming disabled.

Among the 18 persons who made entry into agriculture: three entered by their own vocational choice; nine entered as a result of guidance and counseling services provided by a vocational rehabilitation agency for the blind; one decided upon agriculture as a permanent occupation after following it as a hobby for awhile; and

the remaining five, as mentioned above, grew up on the farm and have remained there. With respect to land ownership 12 of the 18 own their acreage. The remaining six rent or lease the property they occupy.

TABLE I

DISTRIBUTION OF COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES
RECEIVED FROM BLIND FARM OPERATORS
BY STATES AND TERRITORIES

Names of States and Territories	Number of Questionnaires Received
Florida	1
Hawaii	2
Iowa	1
Kansas	1
Minnesota	1
Mississippi	4
North Carolina	1
Ohio	2
Tennessee	1
Utah	1
Washington	1
Wisconsin	2
Total	18

Problems because of blindness

The recipients of the questionnaires were requested to state the biggest problem they face in operating their farm objects because of blindness. This question was followed by one asking for a listing of jobs for which sighted help was needed and used. The writer should have presupposed that the two questions were closely identified. Replies to the two inquiries were considerably parallel in content. For this reason, reporting on the two points has been combined with the assumption that, for the most part, the problems encountered have been solved through the use of sighted help.

The four problems due to blindness most often found in agricultural work are: crop cultivation; inspection and detection of diseases; driving trucks and other mobile equipment; and book-keeping and handling of accounts.

Several aspects of day by day farm operation ranked next to this in importance as a problem. Reports indicated that some phase of each operation usually necessitated some sighted help. Listed among the farm operation problems were: inability to differentiate colors; making of major repairs around the farm, especially where scaffolding and high climbing is involved; some phases of construction of new buildings and equipment; loss of small tools; fence repair; purchasing supplies; mixing feeds for livestock and poultry; inability to develop safety measures around the farm; and lack of accessible reference material on specific farm problems

when needed.

Cultivation of crops represented problems to some of the farmers reporting. Particular problems existed for each farmer depending upon the kind of crops he grew. Representative of some of them were: sowing very small seeds; hoeing weeds in the crops; and mowing, raking, and bailing of hay.

The study indicated that harvesting and delivering crops and products are not problems of the group because of blindness. There was recognition that harvesting usually entails an enormous volume of work within a comparatively short period of time which necessitates the hiring of help regardless of disability.

Those persons who raise livestock mentioned some very specific difficulties in their line of work. Problems among the livestock raisers because of blindness were: cattle breeding; inspection and judging of livestock; the care of sick, diseased, and injured animals; administration of routine veterinary treatment where sight is absolutely essential; pasture programming; and quality control in milk.

The major problems reported by the poultry raisers included management, disease control, and egg production.

Social and psychological background information on this study group is not available. Therefore, it is not possible to evaluate other factors in addition to blindness that may have influenced the formation of their judgments of their farming problems

because of lack of sufficient sight. There is evidence to support the belief that blindness alone is not the exclusive factor within each person's frame of reference which influences him to avoid certain farm tasks because of lack of sight. The evidence is contained in the study. With the exception of driving trucks and large mobile equipment every job which constituted a problem previously mentioned is being performed by one or more persons in the group who lack sight.

Advice offered by blind farm operators

Recipients of the questionnaires were asked, "What advice have you to offer other blind persons who might be thinking of entering your kind of work?" Response to this question was profuse but indicative of how each reflects on his own situation, and how he would see others laboring without sight. Those reporting were in almost complete agreement that it is absolutely necessary that a blind person have a genuine liking for farming in order to experience any measure of success. They were almost as fully agreed that a blind farmer should be well trained on all phases of agricultural operations as possible.

Other points to consider relative to "initial consideration" of agriculture as an occupation included: need of a lifetime acquaintance with farming; considerable academic knowledge of agriculture; consideration of a person's general health and sight; possession of

general all around handiness in the use of tools and materials; and emotional adjustment.

Advice offered to those who may have decided upon agriculture as an occupation and have reached the "planning stage" included: make a careful survey of potential success of the project in which an individual is interested, especially the location and available markets for products; have available adequate capital before making a start; specialize in one crop or item; and if at all possible start with a partner who has full sight such as wife, brother or other close relative.

"Management and operation" appeared to be of greatest interest to those reporting because they were most generous with their advice on this subject. Some of the encouraging and discouraging points of advice were: own or rent a place large enough to justify hiring help, otherwise stay out of farming; operate any project on a sighted basis and not as a blind person so that other competitors will respect the blind; start on a small scale and expand gradually; do not expect early returns in the way of profits; exercise a great deal of care with respect to marketing of products; and for sake of efficiency have facilities easily accessible.

A few of the farmers that answered the inquiry inferred that the magnitude of material and labor problems besetting the blind entrepreneur usually is in inverse proportion to the amount of vision. This inference is contained in advice such as: "use

only people who are reliable help and can be trusted;" "visually disabled persons can easily miss a lot, so be willing to learn and take advice from other people in the field who know;" and for efficiency in operation, "always buy high grade tools, stock, feed, and other materials."

Some of the concluding advice given by respondents to the inquiry emphasized that farming is hard work and requires a lot of patience. They also added that a blind person coming into the field for the first time must be willing and able to take some "hard knocks." Farming is a difficult business for able bodied people and is not recommended as an occupation for the blind except in unusual cases according to Edward Vincent who sent to this writer the following letter:

I was fortunate to grow up between two rows of corn on my father's farm where I learned to work and absorb the fundamental principles of farming.

During fourteen years of school teaching my sight failed gradually so I had to look for another means of livelihood. Believing that livestock and crops would grow and produce whether I could see or not, I decided to engage in farming.

In 1921 I moved to the farm where I have operated ever since, except for a few years during the second world war when I was employed in a factory as a broom winder. . . . For the first twenty years on the farm I had partial vision but since then I have worked in total darkness. Before the second world war I managed the farm by employing sighted help during the planting, growing and harvesting season. Without any assistance I operated a dairy, took care of fifty to seventy-five stock cattle, and a few hogs. With the assistance of my wife we maintained a good sized flock of chickens. Since the second world war I

have confined my activities mostly to the poultry flock. From a flock of 700 or 800 hens I market in excess of 10,000 dozen eggs annually.

At present I rent out my farm land and pasture. However, I build and maintain fences and keep the buildings in good repair, doing my own carpenter work and painting. . . . Farming is an uphill business for even able-bodied people with all their faculties. While it is possible for a blind farmer to meet with fair success, I would not recommend it as an occupation except in unusual cases.

Cash invested to establish farm projects

The questionnaires returned by blind agriculturists were all from operators. All but two of the respondents reported the amount of cash that was required to get started. The amounts are listed in Table II. Although the percentage of questionnaires returned was small the figures in Table II are indicative of the imperative need for resources by most farm operators. Comparison of Table II with Table V offers support to this observation.

Jobs performed by farm operators

The operators who answered the questionnaires enumerated the jobs they do themselves. A listing of the jobs may be found in Table III. The variety of jobs performed by this group of blind agriculturists illustrates the wide range of ability found among the sightless in this occupational area. It also shows the demands a blind operator must expect to have placed upon him if he wishes to pursue a rural project. When the professional counselor is aware

TABLE II

AMOUNTS INVESTED IN CASH TO ESTABLISH FARM PROJECTS
AS REPORTED BY BLIND FARM OPERATORS

Number of Blind Operators Reporting	Kind of Farm Project	Amounts Invested in Cash
1	Chinchillas	\$ 3,500
1	Dairy	1,000
1	Dairy	3,000
1	General	1,000
1	General	2,500
1	General	3,200
1	Livestock	15,000
1	Livestock	18,000
1	Poultry	1,000
1	Poultry	1,450
1	Poultry	2,400
1	Poultry	2,500
1	Poultry	3,000
1	Poultry	9,000
1	Swine	826
1	Turkeys	16,340

Total 16

TABLE III

ENUMERATION OF SOME JOBS PERFORMED BY BLIND
OPERATORS ON RURAL PROJECTS

Number of Persons Performing the Job	Kind of Job Performed
14	feeding livestock and poultry
13	harvesting
13	management
10	equipment repair
10	watering stock, crops and plants
9	cleaning equipment
8	purchasing of supplies
7	selling products
5	processing eggs and candling
5	construction of equipment and buildings
3	cultivating
3	innoculations and medications
3	planting crops
2	dressing chickens for market
2	tobacco grading
1	assembling milking units
1	clearing land
1	cooling milk
1	crating berries
1	insect control
1	milking cows
1	mulching
1	plowing and disking
1	potting bulbs
1	pruning trees and shrubs
1	temperature control
1	veterinary duties, limited

of the demands of the occupation he can exercise greater wisdom in his attempt to develop placements.

Some Attitudes and Reactions of Agencies Providing Rehabilitation Services to the Blind

The present status of rural rehabilitation is partially revealed in attitudes and reactions found in responses from 31 agencies providing rehabilitation services to the blind. A summary of each state's presentation may be found in Appendix D.

Agency attitudes about rural rehabilitation

Nineteen agencies reporting indicated a definitely favorable attitude toward the rehabilitation of blind persons in agricultural pursuits. A questionable attitude, if not a negative one, was expressed by six agencies. Three agencies reported no program of rural rehabilitation. The reports from the three remaining states gave the impression of taking a somewhat neutral attitude on the subject.

Attitudes of those agencies supporting rural rehabilitation may best be exemplified by quoting excerpts from replies from five of the respondents. Howard H. Hanson of the South Dakota agency made the following remarks in his reply to the questionnaire:

We feel that agricultural projects have been long neglected in programs of services to the blind. We realize that they will be somewhat rough in terms of economic, but many other occupations where we make placements are also rough. We feel that if it is a proper expenditure of vocational rehabilitation funds to provide long term training of a blind person which involves thousands of dollars then it should also be a correct expenditure to establish someone in an agricultural project which costs a similar amount. Although our budget has not always permitted us to affect this philosophy, we do have hopes that in years to come we will be able to establish one or two projects each year involving quite large sums of money.

Those agencies carrying on an active rural program largely agreed that it is well to keep a rural person in a rural setting if otherwise feasible. This was typified in the questionnaire returned by W. C. Cliett, Agricultural Enterprise Specialist for the Florida Council for the Blind. His comment is given below:

We feel that usually it is a mistake to take a person with an aptitude for agriculture out of their environment and attempt to place them in some other line of work. Although I do not have the costs available for persons placed in other lines of employment I do not believe that the cost for a case placed in agricultural employment is any higher and probably would be lower than in other lines of work.

The idea of risk remains always uppermost in the mind of any agency administrator. The few agencies that annually rehabilitate several blind persons in agriculture maintain that the cost and risk is no greater than for other types of placement. This is illustrated by the statement below which was given by Norman M. Yoder, Vocational Rehabilitation Consultant for the Pennsylvania Council for the Blind.

We believe that if adequate investigation of market potential and client's ability is made, the risk of failure here is no greater and no less than other business ventures. The cost in most instances is less than that of other business enterprises operations.

The full scope of rural rehabilitation services to the blind was adequately reported by R. M. Barnhart, Vocational Rehabilitation Supervisor for the Kansas State Department of Social Welfare.

The text is as follows:

It would hardly be accurate to say that we have a well developed plan for the rehabilitation of clients in agricultural pursuits. This is in part due to the fact that at this point we do not have a staff member whose sole or primary responsibility is that of serving rural clients. As a result of this plans for agricultural projects are developed and evaluated individually as they arise. We have been able to render valuable assistance to some clients already engaged in farm activities by exploring with them possibilities of extending or intensifying the programs in which they are already engaged. In such instances our contributions fall in the areas of assisting the client to more accurately evaluate his role in the farming activities; assisting the client in securing and utilizing supervisory and consultative services of various agencies; the providing of training in specific areas and the providing of occupational tools and equipment. There is an occasional placement as an agricultural worker on a wage basis. We have the services of an agricultural consultant from Kansas State College who evaluates each proposal for establishing an agricultural project or for working with the client who is already engaged in farming.

Farming as an occupation in Kansas is, to a considerable extent, a large scale operation requiring rather substantial capitalization. As a consequence, the establishment of farming operations is rather difficult unless it is possible to develop a rather highly specialized project. Even this type of project usually requires rather high capitalization. We have concluded that to some extent the expansion of small business opportunities for clients in rural areas is in part the answer. There is also an indication that small industries scattered throughout the state can absorb a few rural blind. The expansion of the home industry program of the agency may also be a factor in better serving the rural client.

The need for future planning in a few of the programs is expressed by Homer Nowatski, Chief of Illinois Services for the Blind.

I think there is much to learn about motivation, training, experience, and financing blind clients in rural placement. This area of employment is feasible for some blind clients and will develop as we gain confidence and experience.

Negative attitudes toward rural rehabilitation of the blind as held by six agencies, appear to center around lack of confidence in the ability of the blind, cost and consumption of time on the part of staff workers, and past project failures. Agencies representing the states of Idaho, Kentucky, and Iowa have expressed themselves clearly in their replies to questionnaires sent them. A spokesman for the Idaho program made the following remarks:

In regard to the agency program for rehabilitation of blind clients in rural agriculture I wish to say that we have had very little success in this area of work. We also wish to say that we are not particularly enthusiastic about the prospect of rehabilitating the blind in rural agriculture since basically the job operations in rural agriculture require a great deal of mobility. Mobility basically is not a desirable feature in considering the placement of blind persons.

In regard to general farm operations, many blind people could perform the tasks involved but generally cannot do so efficiently, and, therefore, too much time is consumed. . . . In considering costs, success, and failures in the past few years, I am inclined to believe that rural agriculture is not a satisfactory operation for the blind. I do believe that some people can succeed but if industrial opportunities were available I believe that regular industrial placement would be more satisfactory.

The representative for the agency in Kentucky had the following to offer:

We feel that our staff is so limited in number that we cannot attempt extensive agricultural placement. Adequate training and counseling for rural placement is both time consuming and costly, and, except in a very limited way, beyond the scope of our program.

Representing the negative viewpoint of the Iowa program one of the staff members said:

We do not feel that agriculture offers many opportunities to the blind. We can finance specialty projects but farming as it is generally practiced takes capital in quantities that we cannot deal in.

The agencies discussed in this chapter so far are primarily responsible for providing services to the civilian blind. One other agency, the Veterans Administration, is exclusively dedicated to serving veterans. Because of national scope and availability of funds a very broad concept exists here. The rehabilitation program of the Veterans Administration (26, pp. 3-7) has as one of its primary objectives the attempt to rehabilitate seriously disabled veterans (including the blind) at whatever effort and expense might be involved to bring about a successful placement.

Allocation of staff time to rural rehabilitation

Five of the 31 agencies that replied to the inquiry reported having one or more workers on the staff who devote their entire time to serving clients interested in agricultural pursuits. The Missouri agency reported having two on its staff while Florida, Ohio, and Minnesota each have one. The Alabama program currently has two specialists assigned to a special research project.

Among the other agencies rural rehabilitation services are crowded in with the total program and are usually handled by the regular counselors who ordinarily serve cases on a territorial basis.

Record of placements in agricultural occupations

At the time this study was completed the writer had been unable to locate many meaningful reports on previous placement of blind persons in agricultural employment by public and private agencies and organizations. The number of agricultural placements made during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1956, by the 31 agencies that reported for the study totaled 182. A distribution of these placements may be found in Table IV. Twelve agencies reported approximate average per case costs for placement of their blind in agricultural activity. The figures are not very meaningful but do indicate that agency dollar participation as compared to the total cost of a placement necessitates considerable utilization of other resources. Average per case costs reported by the agencies is given in Table V.

A study completed by the Veterans Administration (20, pp. 3-7) in 1955 lists 388 occupational summaries of totally blinded veterans of World War II and the Korean War. Of this number, 48, or approximately 12 percent, were found to be successfully engaged in agricultural pursuits of some kind. Although general farming and animal care were reported in considerable numbers,

TABLE IV

NUMBER OF AGRICULTURAL PLACEMENTS REPORTED BY
STATES AND TERRITORIES FOR FISCAL YEAR
ENDING JUNE 30, 1956

Names of States and Territories	Number of Placements	Names of States and Territories	Number of Placements
Alabama	0	Missouri	*
Alaska	0	Nevada	0
California	0	New York	3
Connecticut	0	North Carolina	13
Delaware	0	Ohio	7
Florida	32	Oklahoma	6
Hawaii	1	Pennsylvania	4
Idaho	0	South Dakota	3
Illinois	1	Tennessee	21
Iowa	0	Texas	**
Kansas	*	Utah	0
Kentucky	2	Virginia	0
Maryland	0	Virgin Islands	0
Minnesota	1	Washington	0
Mississippi	36	Wisconsin	2
		Wyoming	0

182

*Reported some placements but number not given.
**Reported approximately 30% to 40% are rural cases.

TABLE V

APPROXIMATE AVERAGE PER CASE COST FOR AGRICULTURAL
PLACEMENTS REPORTED BY STATES AND TERRITORIES

Names of States and Territories	Approximate Case Cost
Florida	\$410.43
Hawaii	\$1,527
Illinois	\$528
Kentucky	\$500
Mississippi	\$500 to \$800
North Carolina	\$110 to \$1,643
Ohio	\$25 per month acceptance to closure
Oklahoma	\$700 to \$800
Pennsylvania	\$950
South Dakota	\$2,000
Tennessee	\$487.76
Wisconsin	\$400 to \$2,400

poultry raising was most frequently reported. It appears from a review of many of the summaries that utilization of outside resources has been of less importance in the Veterans Administration cases because of the generous availability of funds and objectives where the seriously disabled are concerned.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Material for this study has been gathered from published literature which is very scarce, questionnaires completed by 31 agencies providing rehabilitation services to blind persons, questionnaires completed by 18 blind persons already engaged in agricultural pursuits, and a few personal contacts with blind agriculturists.

The study indicates that in the past, little has been accomplished by organized programs in the area of rural rehabilitation of the blind. Counseling practice within the majority of the agencies still is for the most part in terms of removing the rural blind from their rural setting and attempting to establish them in urban types of employment. This is still done in spite of the knowledge that in general it has been determined that persons who are accustomed to rural life have often not been happy or successful when moved from their usual environment and placed in unfamiliar and unusual surroundings.

Some forces that are dictating agency practice and thereby limiting rural rehabilitation are: lack of agricultural knowledge and understanding on the part of counselors; devotion of attention to

developing work opportunities of an industrial nature which presents fewer obstacles to be faced in training and placement of clients; accessibility in effective numbers of urban blind which affords a better showing on the part of agency reports; and restriction in the planning and ultimate approval of rural rehabilitation objectives through limitation of agency funds.

The Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is attempting to promote rural rehabilitation for the blind through education and research. For a number of years this office has provided state agency programs with a rural occupational manual which outlines in detail the procedure and job analysis on numerous agricultural occupations shown to be suitable for the blind. Under sponsorship of this agency, rural rehabilitation training institutes are conducted in different sections of the country to offer state program counselors an opportunity to gain specialized skill and understanding in this area.

Through sponsorship of research projects, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is attempting to explore and develop practical approaches to some of the problems of rehabilitating blind persons in rural pursuits. The findings are made available to state programs upon completion of the projects.

The completed questionnaires received from both agency programs and blind agriculturists reflected very little of present day community thinking. Most of the published material concerning community thinking was more than five years old. The material that was available emphasized the kind of socially acquired

information and attitudes that historically has placed all blind in a category of helplessness.

Until recently it has seemed that the community could believe only that which it could see. Therefore, the best way for a blind person to remove himself from the stereotyped classification has been through successful participation as a member of the community. This he might accomplish by successful operation of an enterprise offering economic self-sufficiency. The writer believes that community attitudes are rapidly changing to the concept that blind people are a part of the overall citizenry and that they just happen to have a visual disability. The belief is that the blind themselves are changing the thinking through their increasing successes in almost every economic endeavor.

Records of the Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation report that state agency programs rehabilitated, into agriculture and kindred pursuits, 340 blind persons during the fiscal year 1954, and 361 for 1955. The number of rural placements made by the Veterans Administration and private agencies is not known. It is quite likely that a much greater number of placements were effected through the efforts of the blind themselves than were accomplished through services of organized community agencies.

Perhaps the Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation could further stimulate rural rehabilitation activity in the state

programs by attempting to accomplish the following two things:

1. Eliminate one of the procedures which measures state agency program success by the number of "closures" turned in annually. This removal of closure pressure may stimulate the processing of more agricultural cases which usually require greater time to plan and execute.
2. Sponsor the introduction of Congressional legislation aimed at making it possible for blind persons to obtain loans more easily through the Farmers Home Administration. This might help to remove the stumbling block experienced by state programs in trying to aid clients with agricultural objectives to obtain land, buildings, and large equipment.

The writer is led to conclude that blind individuals with rural interests are far ahead of organized rehabilitation programs with respect to bringing about successful accomplishment of rural vocational objectives. Their realistic viewpoints were obvious in published case histories and in the questionnaires that were returned. Their confidence and self-help appeared in the writings. The ways in which they circumvented problems is well documented. They recognized their greatest problems which centered around mobility and communication.

Finally, the respondents to the questionnaires indicated that they hold the conviction that what they have done can be done by others without sight provided they have a genuine love and interest in farm activity.

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APPENDIX

THE FOLLOWING LIST OF NAMES IS A SUMMARY OF THE NAMES OF THE

1. Adams	Adams, John
2. Baker	Baker, John
3. Carter	Carter, John
4. Evans	Evans, John
5. Green	Green, John
6. Hall	Hall, John
7. King	King, John
8. Lee	Lee, John
9. Miller	Miller, John
10. Smith	Smith, John
11. Taylor	Taylor, John
12. White	White, John
13. Brown	Brown, John
14. Wilson	Wilson, John
15. Moore	Moore, John
16. Jackson	Jackson, John
17. Harris	Harris, John
18. Clark	Clark, John
19. Lewis	Lewis, John
20. Walker	Walker, John
21. Young	Young, John
22. Allen	Allen, John
23. Wright	Wright, John
24. Scott	Scott, John
25. Green	Green, John
26. Adams	Adams, John
27. Baker	Baker, John
28. Carter	Carter, John
29. Evans	Evans, John
30. Green	Green, John
31. Hall	Hall, John
32. King	King, John
33. Lee	Lee, John
34. Miller	Miller, John
35. Smith	Smith, John
36. Taylor	Taylor, John
37. White	White, John
38. Brown	Brown, John
39. Wilson	Wilson, John
40. Moore	Moore, John
41. Jackson	Jackson, John
42. Harris	Harris, John
43. Clark	Clark, John
44. Lewis	Lewis, John
45. Walker	Walker, John
46. Young	Young, John
47. Allen	Allen, John
48. Wright	Wright, John
49. Scott	Scott, John
50. Green	Green, John

APPENDIX A

AGENCIES FROM WHICH REPLIES TO QUESTIONNAIRES
WERE RECEIVED

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 1. Alabama | Institute for Deaf and Blind,
Adult Blind Department,
Talladega, Alabama |
| 2. Alaska | Office of Vocational Rehabilitation,
Juneau, Alaska |
| 3. California | Department of Education,
Sacramento, California |
| 4. Connecticut | Board of Education of the Blind,
Hartford, Connecticut |
| 5. Delaware | State Commission for the Blind,
Wilmington, Delaware |
| 6. Florida | Florida Council for the Blind,
Daytona Beach, Florida |
| 7. Hawaii | Conservation of Sight and Work
for the Blind,
Honolulu, Hawaii |
| 8. Idaho | Department of Public Assistance,
Boise, Idaho |
| 9. Illinois | Board of Vocational Education,
Springfield, Illinois |
| 10. Iowa | Commission for the Blind,
Des Moines, Iowa |
| 11. Kansas | Department of Social Welfare,
Topeka, Kansas |
| 12. Kentucky | Department of Education,
Frankfort, Kentucky |
| 13. Maryland | State Department of Education,
Baltimore, Maryland |

- | | | |
|-----|----------------|--|
| 14. | Minnesota | Department of Public Welfare,
St. Paul, Minnesota |
| 15. | Mississippi | Department of Public Welfare,
Jackson, Mississippi |
| 16. | Missouri | Department of Public Health and
Welfare,
Jefferson City, Missouri |
| 17. | Nevada | State Board for Vocational Educa-
tion,
Carson City, Nevada |
| 18. | New York | Department of Social Welfare
Commission for the Blind,
Albany, New York |
| 19. | North Carolina | State Commission for the Blind,
Raleigh, North Carolina |
| 20. | Ohio | Department of Public Welfare,
Columbus, Ohio |
| 21. | Oklahoma | State Board of Vocational Educa-
tion,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma |
| 22. | Pennsylvania | Department of Welfare,
State Council for the Blind,
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania |
| 23. | South Dakota | Service to the Blind,
Pierre, South Dakota |
| 24. | Tennessee | Department of Public Welfare,
Nashville, Tennessee |
| 25. | Texas | State Commission for the Blind,
Austin, Texas |
| 26. | Utah | Department of Public Instruction,
Division of Vocational Rehabili-
tation,
Salt Lake City, Utah |

27. Virginia
Commission for the Visually
Handicapped,
Richmond, Virginia
28. Virgin Islands
Insular Department of Social
Welfare,
Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin
Islands
29. Washington
Department of Public Assistance,
Olympia, Washington
30. Wisconsin
Department of Public Welfare,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
31. Wyoming
Department of Education,
Cheyenne, Wyoming

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO BLIND AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

While here at the University of Colorado I am attempting to make a study of agricultural work for the blind. To do the study I need first hand information. This must come direct from the blind. I have asked state agencies to send these messages to the blind actively working in agriculture because I have no way of knowing names and addresses.

Would you please write a letter (or use this sheet) and give me the information asked for below. I need the information by March first. Please mail it direct to my address. I am legally blind but am a very poor braille reader so would you please reply in handwriting or by typewriter.

Thanks very much for your help.

Mr. Sharon Roy Cromeenes
Dept. of Psychology
University of Colorado
Boulder, Colorado

1. Were you raised on a farm?
2. Do you have your own farm or do you work for wages?
3. How did you get started in your work?
4. About how much cash did it take to get started?
5. What do you grow, produce or raise?
6. Briefly tell what your jobs are.
7. For what jobs do you need sighted help?
8. What are a few of your biggest problems because of blindness?
9. What advice have you to offer other blind persons who might
be thinking of entering your kind of work?

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO REHABILITATION AGENCIES
FOR THE BLIND

Dear _____

I am on educational leave from the Montana agency for the blind for the purpose of completing graduate work in rehabilitation counseling. While I am here I am attempting to make a study of the over all program of rehabilitating blind people in rural work. This is to be compiled in the form of a thesis. I would appreciate your help in the following ways:

1. Would you please summarize your agency's present program for attempting to rehabilitate blind clients in rural agriculture?
2. Considering cost, successes and failures over recent years, what is your practical viewpoint relative to rural training and placement of the blind?
3. Information is desired regarding some specific basic problems your program is experiencing in the attempt to rehabilitate blind persons on farm projects and as agricultural wage earners.
4. I would like to know the number of staff workers devoting full time to agricultural training and placement of the blind.
5. Would you approximate the number of rural placements and average per case cost for the last fiscal year?
6. Would you please ask four blind persons in _____ who are actively engaged in agricultural pursuits to complete the attached inquiry and mail it directly to me? It would broaden the study if one of the four might be a blind agricultural wage earner.
7. If you have developed any publications concerned with farm projects or rural placement, could I have copies?

For many years I have been on the receiving end of inquiries of this nature. I know that answering them properly is time consuming. I would, therefore, very much appreciate your taking the time to give me fairly brief but concise information that will contribute to the study.

Sincerely yours,

SRC:mc
enc.

Sharon Roy Cromeenes

APPENDIX D

State Agency Policies, Attitudes and Problems Relative
to Rehabilitation of Blind Persons in Rural Pursuits

ALABAMA has recently placed primary emphasis upon an experimental program of training blind farmers. The agency believes there is a definite place in rural activity for the blind.

ALASKA has no program for rehabilitating rural blind because of the rigors of the climate, type of country in which a person would have to live, and poor means of communication.

CALIFORNIA presents no report on policies, attitudes and problems.

CONNECTICUT indicates no objection to rehabilitating blind persons in rural pursuits but no effort has been made specifically to develop a rural program because only a small per cent of the blind in rural areas wishes to remain there.

DELAWARE questions the success of rural projects. Usually the agency has brought their rural blind into nearby towns for industrial and commercial employment.

FLORIDA takes a favorable position on rural rehabilitation and feels that agricultural projects for the blind have long been neglected. All rural agricultural cases are referred to the agriculture specialist. Some of the problems encountered by the program are: many rural referrals are 60 years of age or older; lack of ambition on the part of many clients; difficulties that arise in convincing many employers that blind persons can function effectively; an occasional family situation that prevents a client from accepting rehabilitation services leading to employment; and the fear of some clients that they may lose the security of public assistance grants. Agencywise there is the necessity of a great deal of travel in order to contact clients.

HAWAII pursues the policy that certain individuals under certain circumstances can perform well in rural pursuits. The agency's program is geared to feasibility. The potentialities for rural rehabilitation of the blind are as yet unexplored in the islands.

IDAHO at present does not have many farm cases because of lack of staff. There is some doubt about the success of rural projects. An applicant for rural rehabilitation services would have to be exceptional, unusual or have an unusual opportunity.

ILLINOIS has no special program for training and placement of the rural blind. Services are handled by regular staff. The agency thinks there is much to learn about motivation, training, experience, and financing blind clients in rural placement. There exists the belief that this area of employment is feasible for some blind clients and will develop as the program gains confidence and experience. Some of the basic problems faced by the agency include: lack of motivation and interest on the part of a blind person because he feels that blindness eliminates any chance of direct participation in rural work and activities; lack of confidence in a blind person by the family and agricultural interests in the community; training procedures and techniques have not been sufficiently developed or used to prepare a number of blind persons to work efficiently in competitive rural agriculture; and family or client do not have sufficient funds, nor can funds be found available, to permit adequate establishment and development of rural agricultural projects for the blind client.

IOWA limits agricultural projects to those blind with specific roots in a rural area. The program can finance specialty projects but does not feel that agriculture offers many opportunities to the blind since farming as it is generally practiced takes capital in quantities the agency cannot deal in. The agency feels that two of the many problems facing the client are: inability of the blind to operate mobile equipment; and a blind person's cost of hiring help is ordinarily higher in a field where only the most efficient units can show a profit.

KANSAS has accepted the responsibility for serving rural rehabilitation clients when they can be served adequately. A continuous study is being made of the ways in which rural blind persons can be best served. The agency has learned by experience that oftentimes the clients interested in agricultural pursuits are not the clients with the basic traits and abilities required for success in the area. The size of general farming operations in Kansas makes it very difficult for a blind person to develop a full time job unless he is unusually qualified in management and has an opportunity to manage a well capitalized operation. There are also administrative limitations on farm project financing which create problems occasionally.

KENTUCKY gives little emphasis to rural rehabilitation. It is felt that the staff is so limited in number that the agency cannot attempt extensive agricultural placements. Adequate training and counseling for rural placement is both time-consuming and costly. Except in a very limited way such activity is beyond the scope of the program.

MARYLAND presents no policies, attitudes or problems except to state that the agency's experience with rural projects has been very limited.

MINNESOTA holds the viewpoint that any agricultural project for the blind client is excellent, provided: the client is trained to operate the project as a blind person; provided the trainer is "sold" on the idea and knows the philosophy that will bring the blind trainee independence; and provided the trainer holds the client to an accounting of his operation and insists on good business practices. The basic problems include: motivating clients to take training, especially those clients living on farms and having families; and getting the trainer dedicated to the job.

MISSISSIPPI reports rural agricultural placements to be a major part of the agency's program. Successes, failures and costs are about the same for rural placements as for any other field of placement. It is one of the most practical placements that can be made. The greatest limitation is the client not being able to build his own dairy barns and poultry houses.

MISSOURI believes it is desirable to keep a blind person in the rural setting if he indicates a sincere interest and aptitude for rural activity. The agency follows the practice that rural training and placement of certain blind individuals is not only feasible but adviseable. Rural cases are assigned to full time agricultural specialists on the staff.

NEVADA is directing its program toward dairy and poultry projects. Cases are handled as part of the regular program. Services are based upon eligibility, feasibility, and not on past failures. Much depends upon the client and his willingness to be honest and above-board in his dealings with the agency. One of the biggest problems is the client's inability to cope with managerial matters.

NEW YORK follows the belief that there is a rightful place in rural activity for the blind. Not many farm cases have been handled because of lack of staff. More activity is anticipated in the future.

NORTH CAROLINA is attempting to rehabilitate blind clients in agriculture whenever this appears to be the most feasible and logical employment objective. One of the agency's major problems in rehabilitating blind people as farmers is geographical location. Some parts of the state are isolated and the market problems almost preclude farming operations for blind people in those areas.

OHIO believes in giving a blind person an opportunity to remain in his rural setting if he indicates a sincere interest and aptitude for rural activities. The agency retains one full time specialist to handle agricultural cases because there is a definite place in rural activity for the blind. Perhaps one of the essentials is the client's sincere desire to make use of available resources.

OKLAHOMA indicates that rural rehabilitation of the blind has been very discouraging. The agency has no special program for training and placement in rural activity. All cases of this nature are handled by the regular staff. Perhaps the greatest obstacle is the legal limitation on the use of funds for purchase of land and buildings because the client is usually not in possession of adequate resources to finance these items in his proposed project.

PENNSYLVANIA reports that rural rehabilitation is a relatively new aspect of the agency's program. Recognizing that agricultural projects have long been neglected, the agency is endeavoring to educate the staff as well as clients on the possibilities of rural rehabilitation. The agency has not served many farm cases primarily because of lack of staff and lack of a competent and experienced rural rehabilitation man.

SOUTH DAKOTA believes that agricultural projects have long been neglected. The agency is interested in rural rehabilitation because South Dakota is primarily a rural state. Some very definite problems have arisen for the program. Some of the problems include: lack of experience in handling rural projects; previous year's funds have been so limited that the agency could not participate to a sufficient extent to make a person self-employed in rural projects; difficulties in working out plans for clients because of farm indebtedness; client's inability to cope with managerial problems; acquisition of land either by renting or buying since the agency is legally unable to provide such funds; financing of small projects through the normal channels of finance such as the banks, FHA, and Federal Land Bank; finding blind clients who are actually interested and have an ability to carry on a farm project; and difficulties in convincing dairymen and other employers that blind persons can function efficiently.

TENNESSEE having a high record of rural placements easily evidences its position that rural rehabilitation is a major field and that such placements are among the most practical that can be made. Some of the difficulties the program experiences are: lack of adequate training personnel; lack of time of counselor to devote to the development of agricultural pursuits; agency's legal inability to

provide funds for the acquisition of needed land and buildings; and the development of markets for farm products.

TEXAS has a policy of first working out an employment opportunity for the client on his "home ground" if possible. This means, of course, that in cases where clients live in rural areas, every consideration is given to developing rural projects or jobs on farms on a wage level. The agency believes that the problems in developing rural opportunities for the blind are not different from the problems encountered in developing other types of employment. The primary problem is getting the rural client to consent to leave home for adjustment and vocational training.

UTAH has no specific program for rural rehabilitation. If a client expresses interest in rural activity the counselor will work closely with him. The agency has stated that the majority of their blind people desire to move to the city to take a job.

VIRGINIA in the past has not made an extensive effort to explore and develop the needs or desires of their rural blind. The agency is planning to initiate an aggressive rural program in the near future. The counselors have had some small successes with rural projects but only a few have been attempted.

VIRGIN ISLANDS do not present their position relative to program, policy, and problems.

WASHINGTON is not in a position to offer much information because only during the last year and a half they have attempted to do much in rural agriculture for the blind.

WISCONSIN believes rural training and placement of certain blind individuals is not only feasible but advisable. Certain individuals under certain circumstances can perform well in rural pursuits. The program has its problems, some of which are: inability of the client to build his own dairy barns and poultry houses; legal limitations on the use of funds; and the pseudo interest sometimes firmly fixed in the mind of a person who has been exposed over a period of time to rural activity.

WYOMING reports no specific program for the rehabilitation of the blind in rural pursuits. The staff holds the belief that rural rehabilitation can be successful in selected situations. Lack of clients and jobs are the agency's greatest problems in this field of activity.

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